

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached drawing sheet includes the following changes:

Fig. 5 is newly added.

Attachment: New Sheet

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 8-13 are all of the pending claims, with claims 1 and 13 being written in independent form. By virtue of this Amendment, Applicant adds new claims 11-13.

I. Alleged New Matter:

The Examiner rejects claim 1 for reciting several features that allegedly have no support in the disclosure as originally filed. As the path of least resistance, and without acquiescing to the correctness of the Examiner's position, Applicant amends claim 1 by deleting the objectionable terms "covering" "stamping" and "die cutting."

II. Drawing Objections:

The Examiner objects to the drawings for failing to show various features specified in claim 1. To address the Examiner's concerns, Applicant adds new Fig. 5 to illustrate (albeit in schematic form) various features recited in claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that new Fig. 5 does not introduce any prohibitive new matter to the extent that it only conforms the drawings to the written description portion of the application. For example, support for Fig. 5 is found at paragraphs [0023] and [0026] of the instant specification.

Applicant appropriately amends the specification to refer to new Fig 5.

III. Claim Rejections on Prior Art Grounds:

The Examiner rejects claims 1 and 8 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by US 4,681,001 to Uehlinger ("Uehlinger"); and claim 10 under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Uehlinger in view of US 6,705,979 to Sakaguchi et al. ("Sakaguchi").

Applicant respectfully traverses all of these rejections in view of the following remarks.

A. Independent Claim 1:

Independent claim 1 recites (among other things) that the wave shaped edges are "wave shaped waste portions," which are removed from each length of sheet metal. Straightforward support for these features is found at paragraphs [0006] and [0026] of the instant specification. According to an example embodiment, the wave shaped edges (or waste portions) may be used for clamping, so that the sheet metal may be held in place during subsequent machining. Because the wave shaped edges are waste portions, they may be removed from each length of sheet metal. At least these features (as recited in independent

claim 1), in combination with the other features recited in independent claim 1, are not taught or suggested by the prior art relied upon by the Examiner.

The Examiner relies upon Uehlinger to teach each and every feature of the invention defined by claim 1. In so doing, the Examiner looks to Fig. 3A of the reference, and apparently compares the sheet's top and bottom edge portions (which are defined by the transverse scroll lines 3) to the wave shaped edges defined by claim 1. This rejection position is not convincing for the following reasons.

With reference to Fig. 3A of Uehlinger, a web of coiled material may be primarily scrolled as represented by the transverse scroll lines 3 to provide a plurality of sheets, each having a staggered arrangement of blanks 1c. The transverse scroll lines 3 closely follow the profile of the blanks 1c to minimize the waste generated upon cutting out the blanks 1c. Thus, large portions of the wavy edges of the sheet are occupied by blanks 1c. Certainly then, the wavy edges depicted in Fig. 3A of Uehlinger cannot be properly characterized as "wave shaped waste portions," as recited by claim 1.

In short, Uehlinger is not pertinent to the claimed invention to the extent that the reference is concerned with optimizing the placement of the blanks on the sheet metal so that the blanks 1c occupy significant portions of the wave shaped edges. This is not at all surprising given Uehlinger's express objective of providing strips of material to minimize the shred (or waste) generated by cutting out individual blanks.¹

Applicant respectfully submits that the secondary reference to Sakaguchi does not make up for the deficiencies of Uehlinger noted above.

B. New Independent Claim 13:

Independent claim 13 defines a method that involves (among other things) removing the leading and the trailing wave shaped edges from the "deformed length of sheet metal." Example, non-limiting embodiments of this feature are discussed at paragraphs [0026]+ of the instant specification.

In contrast, Uehlinger teaches that the sheet metal is scrolled (i.e., cut transversely and/or longitudinally) and then blanked to provide a plurality of circular discs. Each circular disc is then deformed to provide an end component 110, as shown in Fig. 5c. The end component 110 is not cut (or otherwise machined) to remove material. Certainly then, the

¹ Uehlinger, col. 2, lines 15-24.

reference is not pertinent to removing wave shaped edges from the deformed length of sheet metal, as recited in claim 13.

CONCLUSION

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of all of the pending claims.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant petitions for a one (1) month extension of time for filing a response in connection with the present application. The required fee of \$120.00 is attached.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.

By _____



Ray Heflin
Reg. No. 41,060
P.O. Box 8910
Reston, VA 20195
(703) 668-8000

DJD/HRH:amp